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General and complete disarmament: follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament

Letter dated 25 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request the issuance of the present letter and the attached document, the Declaration of the Cuban United Nations Association on the occasion of the celebration of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (see annex), as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 101 (hh).

(*Signed*) Anayansi **Rodríguez Camejo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 25 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Spanish]

Declaration of the Cuban United Nations Association on the occasion of the celebration of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The horrific catastrophe following the explosion of nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was a true demonstration of the tremendous danger inherent in the use of such weapons. Since then, achieving global nuclear disarmament has been one of the oldest goals of the United Nations.

On the occasion of the celebration of International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Cuban civil society organizations belonging to the Cuban United Nations Association (ACNU) condemn the existence of some 15,000 nuclear warheads, enough to destroy civilization and put an end to the majority of life on Earth.

The touted reductions in nuclear weapons deployed since the height of the Cold War have by no means resulted in the reduction of nuclear danger, let alone led to concrete measures to fully eliminate such weapons of mass destruction.

The peoples of the world yearn for peace and need a clear commitment towards an effective and legally binding nuclear disarmament process. The renewed focus on increasing the prominence of nuclear deterrence and capacity in military doctrines is unacceptable.

Regrettably, programmes aimed at modernizing and increasing the destructive power of these weapons continue to operate, clearly running counter to the commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It is time to definitively abandon the concept of nuclear deterrence and the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and security policies and to put an immediate end to existing nuclear weapons modernization programmes and to the development of new types of nuclear weapons.

We consider that the very existence of nuclear weapons is a threat to international peace and security. We welcome the fact that, as part of its commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons, Cuba was the fifth country to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. That Treaty was a milestone in the history of the United Nations towards achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament, as it established a new norm of international law categorically prohibiting nuclear weapons under all circumstances.

The substantial resources allocated to the manufacture, modernization, maintenance and security of nuclear arsenals would constitute a significant contribution to the fight against hunger and poverty and to the achievement of the goal of development cherished by millions of people around the world, while promoting international cooperation and meaningfully advancing the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda.

"Let us have the courage to proclaim that all nuclear or conventional weapons, everything that is used to make war, must disappear!" Fidel Castro Ruz.

Havana, 26 September 2018